



# WRITE LINES

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Cover art by Claire L

*In the spirit of C.A. Tradition Six, C.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation or institution. 'Write Lines' is produced by individual members of Cocaine Anonymous. Any opinion, idea or belief expressed is that of an individual and is not representative of C.A. as a whole.*

## **Being of Service**

In addition to finding a spiritual way of life, recovery is about changing negative aspects of our personalities into positive ones.

We may come into the C.A. 12-step program with big egos but little or no self-esteem. We may think we are better than other people yet, at the same time, feel “less than.” We are often the people who took from others and abused friendships all of our lives.

We had no concept of doing anything for anyone without the thought of some kind of reward. By the sheer grace of our Higher Powers, we can find ways of unlearning such behaviour in the C.A. 12-step program.

In fact, one way is to be of service to the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous. We often discovered that the best way to serve God is to serve our fellow humans, and we found humility in the process.

Our self-centred behaviour was gradually replaced with the “attitude of service.” We learned that service is about gratitude and learning how to contribute to our lives and the lives of others.

## **Why Be of Service?**

- To give back what was so freely given to us;
- To take on a commitment as a symbolic way of making amends;
  - To meet other recovering addicts;
  - To learn how to be part of a team;
- To learn humility by doing something selfless for someone else;
  - To learn skills or teach others what we know;
  - To learn responsibility.

## **Twelve-Step Work/Service**

We often wonder how we can carry the message to the addict who still suffers before we get through working all of the Steps. The answer is service. Wasn't it important to us to have someone at the door to welcome us? Was there coffee made? Did someone take the time to greet us? Were there chairs set up? Who read the readings at the beginning of the meeting? Was there someone to empty the ashtrays?

We can find a way to help no matter how long we have been sober. We are told that getting out of ourselves is one of the best things for us to do, and serving our home group is a wonderful way to start.

## **The Home Group**

As newcomers, we hear the suggestion to get a “home group,” but we aren’t sure why. A suggestion is to have a Home Group, a C.A. meeting you turn up to each week where you can start to feel at home and accept service responsibilities. You might help serving brews, setting up the room or passing literature out. Many of us have been in isolation for the last months or years of our using. We feel apart from society and need to connect with people who understand. We find those people at meetings of Cocaine Anonymous.

## **Temporary Sponsorship**

Since our home group gets to know us quite well, they can sometimes act as our sponsor at the beginning of our recovery until we get one of our own. They give us suggestions and listen to our troubles. They explain what the Steps are for and may even get us started on the work. They give us hope to continue on our journey.

## **A Power Greater Than Ourselves**

Sometimes it is difficult to develop a concept of a Power greater than ourselves. Our drugs had been such a power, but what could be greater than that? As we begin to work a program of recovery, we learn that we are defenceless against our addiction. We need a Power greater than ourselves, greater than our addiction. There may be no better place to start than with a group of sober addicts. Our own concept of a Higher Power will come in time as we work the Twelve Steps. Until then, it is good to have the power of the group with us.

Spirit in me  
Give me  
Clarity  
Although ill  
This is the deal  
Walking up the hill  
Without a drink hit or pill  
Need to feel real  
Sometimes surreal  
Dream like  
Not stuck in night  
But drenched in light  
The only thing that is right  
Can't buy for a tenner  
This feeling  
That is surrender

*(Wayne)*



# LIFELINE

**I REMEMBER HOW SCARED I WAS GOING INTO MY 1ST CA MEETING. I DIDN'T KNOW THERE WERE PEOPLE JUST LIKE ME INSIDE. I WAS ABOUT TO WALK AWAY WHEN BY CHANCE ANOTHER ADDICT ASKED ME WAS I LOOKING FOR THE MEETING.**

**I DIDN'T HAVE TO WALK IN ALONE AND NEITHER DO YOU. LIFELINE HAS BEEN SET UP TO HELP PEOPLE GET INTO THEIR FIRST FEW MEETINGS. WE'RE HERE TO WALK WITH YOU SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS ALONE.**

**IF YOU'RE COMING OUT OF A RESIDENTIAL REHAB OR A JAIL OR ANY INSTITUTION AND YOU WANT HELP GETTING TO YOUR FIRST MEETING.**

**PLEASE CONTACT LIFELINE WE'RE HERE TO MEET WITH YOU AND GET YOU INTO MEETINGS.**

**IT'S EASIER TOGETHER.**



**CONTACT HELPLINE:  
0800 612 0225**

**EMAIL:  
LIFELINE@CAUK.ORG.UK**

**MAIL:  
POBOX 1337.  
ENFIELD. EN1 9AS**

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## The C.A. Lifeline Committee

C.A. Lifeline is a service sub-committee of the C.A. Hospitals & Institutions Committee. We are not professionals; we don't take or offer money or ask for rewards. We only want to introduce you to C.A. meetings so that you may hear about the C.A. 12-step program of recovery. C.A. Lifeline's primary purpose is to help you go from treatment to the rooms of Cocaine Anonymous.

### How it works

We will provide a temporary contact in your local area.

Members of Cocaine Anonymous, usually acting in pairs, men for men, women for women, will meet you after your release from treatment or prison and accompany you to your first C.A. meeting.

Participation in the C.A. Lifeline is always voluntary.

### Contacting us

Contact us a week or so prior to leaving the treatment centre or HMP. That will give us the opportunity to arrange a time and place, and so we can make sure that we have C.A. Lifeline volunteers to attend.

### Meeting us

The C.A. members who meet you will be men or women who have at least 6 months sobriety and have completed the 12-step program of recovery.

It may be that you are leaving one area of the UK to travel to another, we have Lifeline volunteers across the UK who could meet you and take you along to a C.A. meeting in your area.

**STEP ONE: We admitted we were powerless over cocaine and all other mind-altering substances—that our lives had become unmanageable.** Our powerlessness operates on three levels:

- (1) **A physical allergy** to cocaine, which makes it virtually impossible for us to stop using once we start;
- (2) **A mental obsession**, which makes it impossible to stay sober permanently on our own (pages 24 and 34 in the 'Big Book'); and
- (3) **A spiritual malady**, which separates us from our Higher Power's ability to get and keep us sober. Many of us assumed that Step One meant we couldn't get high anymore because we couldn't handle using at all. In fact, it really means that barring divine intervention, we are unable to stay away from that first hit, line, or whatever, and that we will use again and again, no matter how much we want to stay sober.

The second part of Step One refers to how we are unable to manage our lives, even when we are sober. One example of this unmanageability is being "restless, irritable, and discontented".

**Step One is the foundation of the entire Twelve-Step process.** Without a full understanding of what this Step means to us personally, we can't expect to make much progress on the other eleven Steps. *(from the C.A. leaflet 'A Guide to the 12 Steps')*

## >Cocaine Anonymous online

The Cocaine Anonymous UK Information Technology committee (IT) is a group of recovering addicts who serve to support Cocaine Anonymous and anyone who is interested in finding out about C.A. Most of what we do is centred around the maintenance and development of the website: [cocaineanonymous.org.uk](http://cocaineanonymous.org.uk)

MEETINGS - The C.A. website holds a list of all meetings from all over the UK. Meetings are either Face-to-Face, Online or both. Most online meetings are held on Zoom and follow a similar format to face-to-face meetings.

SHOP - The IT committee also supports the C.A. Literature committee. We help to maintain the online shop which sells literature to C.A. UK Districts. The Districts then supply literature to meetings. The shop sells clean time keyrings, chips, books, and various pamphlets. The purchase of literature is funded by attendees at meetings, who make donations toward literature and rent for their meeting. This self-funding is known as Tradition 7.

EVENTS - There's lots going on in Cocaine Anonymous around the UK and around the world. We often hold unity events, fund raising events. These include quizzes, picnics, camping trips and an annual C.A. UK convention. The IT committee list these events on the website. The website has lots of other useful tools and information. Anyone wanting to get service as part of the IT committee is welcome. No experience is necessary, our committee is made up of members with varying levels of IT skill and experience.

### **A Way Out** by Richard B

*Escaping reality with baggies and pins. The pipe and the straw, the wipes and the bins. The insatiable thirst, the bong and the bottle. An illusion of control using full throttle; Benzos and booze, sordid places, sexual depravity, too many faces. Misguided choices, hospitals and pain. An endless cycle of sunshine or rain; An insidious script. Day merging with day. Therein the first step which paves the way.*

*The cry for help at a treatment centre.*

*Gaining a friend, a sponsor, a mentor: hearing a message the seed was sown, on more than one occasion but willingness showed. Seeing insanity with no mental defence against the first one - brought to sense. Having a power, hope and light, trudging the steps with clear sight, prayer and meditation, a gratitude list, helping others - you get the gist. Turning it over, relinquishing control. The next right thing to empower your soul. Whoever you are, whatever your tale, walk of life, a success or a fail - you are not alone, Joy is real. You are not different In the way that you fee; I promise you this: That there is a way, And that we can recover. Just for today. (Richard B)*

*Are you about to leave treatment or prison? We're here and ready to help for free.*

If you are looking for a C.A. meeting anywhere in the UK, use the C.A. website: [www.cocaineanonymous.org.uk](http://www.cocaineanonymous.org.uk)

## COCAINE ANONYMOUS HELPLINE

call **0800 612 0225**

email: [helpline@cauk.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cauk.org.uk)

A member of Cocaine Anonymous will put you in contact with a C.A. member in your area. 10:00 - 22:00, 7 days a week. You can also leave a message 24/7, and we'll call you back as soon as we can.

If you are leaving treatment or are due for release, and would like to meet a C.A. member to help you get to a C.A. meeting straight away in your area, then please contact our Lifeline service. Contact Lifeline (via the Helpline or email) at least a week in advance so we can arrange to meet you.



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According to C.A.'s Third Tradition, the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances. It doesn't matter to us if you drank or what type of drugs you used; if you have a desire to stop, you are welcome in Cocaine Anonymous!

**While the name "Cocaine Anonymous" may sound drug-specific, we wish to assure you that our program is not.** Many of our members did a lot of cocaine; others used only a little, and some never even tried coke. Whether we focused on a specific mind-altering substance or used whatever we could get our hands on, we had one thing in common: eventually we all reached a point where we could not stop. Over time, virtually every single one of us has realised that our real problem is not cocaine or any specific drug; it is the disease of addiction. *(Preamble of C.A. that is read out at our meetings)*

*Write Lines* magazine is published by the Cocaine Anonymous Hospitals and Institutions committee.

*All the contributions in this magazine are by men and women who started using, drinking and drugging and lost the power of choice about how much they used. They went to a Cocaine Anonymous meeting and found people there who had once been like themselves but had found a way out from their problem and could now help them to do the same.*

*Recovery and freedom from drug addiction and alcoholism is entirely possible for you as well.*

***Please come along to one of our C.A. meetings that are held in the detox or institution where you are; we will gladly answer any questions you may have and pass on to you how we got well using a 12-step program of recovery.***